



**Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)  
Environment and Natural Resources Committee  
Minutes  
Thursday, April 5, 2018**

Offices of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)  
Lake County Conference Room  
Suite 800, 233 S. Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois

- Members Present:** Ed Collins – McHenry County Conservation District, Keary Cragan – U.S. EPA, Jack Darin – Illinois Sierra Club, Martha Dooley – Village of Schaumburg, Jackie Forbes – Kane County Division of Transportation, Danielle Gallet – Metropolitan Planning Council, Stacy Meyers – Openlands, Mike Prusilla – Lake County Stormwater Management Commission, Joe Schuessler – MWRD, Mike Sullivan (via phone) – IDOT, Sean Wiedel – Chicago Department of Transportation, Nancy Williamson – IDNR, Moira Zellner – University of Illinois-Chicago
- Members Absent:** David Leopold – UI Labs, Deb Stone – Cook County Department of Environmental Control, Kim Wasserman-Nieto – Little Village Environmental Justice Organization
- Staff Present:** Nora Beck, Brian Daly, Kristin Ihnchak, Elizabeth Irvin, Jason Navota, Jared Patton
- Others Present:** Garland Armstrong – Access Living, Jim Anderson – Lake County Forest Preserve District and Chicago Wilderness, Joshua Campbell – UIC CUPPA student, Brandyn Gray -- UIC CUPPA student, Dylan O'Reilly -- UIC CUPPA student, Alexis Stein -- UIC CUPPA student

**1.0 Call to Order**

Sean Wiedel called the meeting to order at approximately 9:30 a.m.

**2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements**

None.

**3.0 Approval of Minutes**

A motion to approve the minutes of the March 1 meeting was made by Ed Collins, seconded by Stacy Meyers with the following edit: the oak mapping effort mentioned in Section 3.0 should be identified as the Chicago Wilderness Regional Oak Mapping project. The motion carried with all in favor.

#### 4.0 ON TO 2050 Draft Environment Chapter – Kristin Ihnchak, Nora Beck, and Jason Navota, CMAP staff

Staff have developed a preliminary draft of the environment chapter for ON TO 2050. At this time, CMAP staff are seeking ENR Committee feedback on the overall structure, recommendations, and ideas presented in the draft chapter, rather than text edits and other small changes. Committee members were asked to prioritize which recommendations within the chapter should be discussed in a committee setting to set the agenda for the conversation. Committee members asked a number of clarifying questions and had the following comments:

- **Recommendation: Improve natural resources through the redevelopment process.**
  - Goal for this section should recognize transportation impacts and opportunities as well as development.
  - Integrating green infrastructure needs to be defined. The reader should understand the concepts of regional, community, and site-scale green infrastructure and the connectivity between these scales. Include links to the integrating green infrastructure strategy paper.
  - Support for inclusion of this redevelopment-focused recommendation. We have been saying this for a long time but haven't made much progress, and really need to focus on making these improvements happen. In addition, the region needs to figure out how to address these issues in disinvested communities where the market pressure is different. Struggling municipalities will take any growth that results in tax revenue increases, often to the detriment of open space.
  - Transforming streets. Streets represent a great opportunity to transform our urban landscape and provide corridors and habitat. Staff commented that this strategy is in the stormwater recommendation and could be cross-referenced here.
  - Add importance of connectivity in the redevelopment process. GI practices, particularly related to water and habitat, work better as systems and the connectivity of these assets contributes to their larger success. In particular, roadway redevelopments can incorporate greenways that provide habitat and ecosystem connectivity. This point needs to be present in the redevelopment section, as well as the next recommendation area.
  - Importance of maintenance. We take for granted what services are being provided by existing features in our urban landscape, need to maintain and improve these as well.
  - Interagency coordination. The redevelopment process is an opportunity to improve coordination, particularly with regard to how to improve environmental performance via redevelopment.
  - Scaling up implementation. The region has seen successful implementation on a small scale, but now it needs to happen more broadly and become integrated in the redevelopment process. This requires funding.
  - Disaster relief funding criteria could stipulate the use of best practices for redevelopment.
- **Recommendation: Prioritize natural and agricultural preservation alongside strategic growth.**

- Strong recommendation to split agriculture from natural resource strategies. Committee members believe that agricultural land and its preservation are fundamentally different from natural land protection. Under the current structure, which is focused on the land use planning side, these differences are not being captured. Committee members consider agricultural land as developed land that has negative consequences for our environment. Protection of these systems inherently involve an economic component where preservation of agricultural land depends on retention of the processing and distribution system. Additional strategies to improve best management practices and transition to more sustainable forms of agricultural production should also be included., and Committee members felt that grouping agricultural and natural lands together elevated the role of agricultural lands and diminished the role of natural lands. Committee members and staff discussed various ways to perform the split. Either creating two strategies – ‘Identify’ and ‘plan’ for natural areas and then ‘identify’ and ‘plan’ for agricultural or create three strategies by keep the ‘identify’ strategy together and split the two planning strategies. Committee members recognized that the recommendation area would likely become more repetitive, but that was ok.
- Addressing agriculture separately will mean that additional strategies could be included to address the negative side effects of large scale production farming, water quality strategies and soil preservation, and potential implications of insect collapse as well as the economic development / tourist angle that is inherently different for different types of farming.
- Suggested renaming this recommendation. Emphasize ecosystem services and the use of the words concurrent or complement instead of “alongside.”
- This recommendation should emphasize adding additional ecosystem services with connectivity and other restoration.
- Valuable oak stands exist outside of high-quality natural areas and should be preserved regardless, as a limited number remain in our region.
- **Recommendation: Protect and enhance the integrity of aquatic systems.**
  - Acknowledge competing management purposes. Dredging on the Fox River may be contributing to drinking water quality issues downstream. These and other examples are important to recognize. Watershed planning efforts are a key way to address this.
  - Lake Michigan-focused recommendation. Committee members noticed the specificity of this strategy to particular water bodies and stated that should also apply to all other water resources. Staff responded that all water resources are addressed throughout this recommendation area, but this strategy was meant to focus in particular on the Lake Michigan, Great Lakes, and CAWS assets given their unique contributions and challenges.
  - Clean Water Act and our commitment to improve all waterways, not just protect remaining high quality waterways. Staff will confirm if the current focus is not comprehensive.
  - Recognize the recreational uses that can be provided by our waterways, not just the drinking water source. Viewing these resources as amenities can

contribute to an economic development strategy, which is a compelling case for conservation.

- **Other:**
  - **Consider renaming the chapter to Natural Resources.** CMAP staff explained that the communications team is thinking about the names of each of the five chapters and committee members requested the opportunity to discuss it later. The name Sustainability has been floated, which got a negative reaction from multiple committee members.
  - **Introduce the land systems earlier in the chapter.** In order to achieve the goals outlined in the chapter, the green infrastructure system and the water system need to be introduced as assets. Recommendation to present the conservation areas layer earlier, perhaps in the climate section.
  - **Review of regionally significant transportation projects.** The criteria should be focused on complementing rather than generating conflict between the projects and the natural systems.
  - **Mitigation is the last step.** Too often the draft starts with a “holding the line” mentality and jumps to accepting the damages of transportation, development, and other decision making. As an innovative plan, it should seek to complement, then avoid, then mitigate as the last resort.
  - **Environmental Justice.** Committee members agree this should be a stand alone recommendation as well as identified throughout the chapter.
  - **Air quality.** Should be included, particularly with regard to health impacts. In addition to regional scale issues, local practices (demolition process, leaf blowers, etc) should also be identified.
  - **Shared services.** Many of the environmental practices that should be incorporated into local planning efforts could benefit from using the shared services approach.
  - **Include links to strategy papers.** Where appropriate in the chapter, reference the strategy development work that was done on particular topics.

CMAP staff reviewed the timeline for the stakeholder feedback period on the draft Environment Chapter. The chapter will be sent to the committee and additional stakeholders on April 6 and CMAP staff requests written comment back by April 17. Due to the number of commenters, please do not track changes. Rather, please insert comments on major issues or points of clarification. CMAP staff will then revise the draft chapter based on that feedback. The draft plan will be released in full on June 15 – August 14 and that’s another opportunity to comment.

#### 5.0 ON TO 2050 Draft Transportation Chapter – Elizabeth Irvin, CMAP staff

CMAP staff is distributing this working draft of the majority of the [ON TO 2050 mobility recommendations](#) to related CMAP committees, partners, and interested stakeholders for initial review. The final section of the mobility chapter, which will contain strategies related to fully funding the transportation system, enhancing the region's approach to transportation programming, and building regionally significant projects, is still undergoing revisions and will be released on Monday, April 9. Using a powerpoint presentation, Elizabeth reviewed the goals and strategies of the draft chapter. The ENR

committee will receive a copy of the draft and will have 3 weeks to comment. Committee members asked a number of clarifying questions and had the following comments:

- **Mobility as a service.** Recommendation to consider using this angle. CMAP staff consider it a means to an end and the strategies are about facilitating that ease of use and managing the impacts.
- **Trough of disillusionment.** Committee members commented on the existence of this phrase!
- **Consideration of crime and transportation access.** While crime is outside of CMAP expertise, the chapter recognizes the tension with traffic enforcement and police presence and the potential of automated enforcement, which also has equity considerations.
- **Resilience in transportation.** Committee members recognize the role the transportation network can play in providing corridors and ecosystem services that can help address air quality, stormwater, etc.
- **Environmental recommendations in strategies focused on walkable communities.** Many environmental best practices should be incorporated here.
- **Local and regional impacts of freight should be assessed first.** This is a spot where the chapter immediately moves to mitigation instead of thinking about the land use decisions from the beginning and how that interacts with transportation investments. Siting decisions of freight facilities should be considered with environmental impacts in mind. Opening up congestion bottlenecks can help us address air quality.
- **Complete street designs.** Bus stops and rail stations should include sidewalks, shelters, space, etc to provide a safe place for people to be. People in wheelchairs are currently put at risk given current street design practices. Jurisdictional collaboration between the transit, road, and municipal decision-makers is key. Schaumburg requires developers to put in bus stops.
- **Transportation projects should enhance, rather than degrade our natural environment.** Also need to recognize noise pollution.
- **Emergency response.** Currently the draft recognizes the impacts of flooding and other congestion to emergency response times and routes. Specific issues with viaducts and trains may be addressed in the freight section, staff will check.
- **Recommendation on naming.** Committee members recommended not referring to people as pedestrians and bicyclists but rather as people who are walking or biking or using a wheelchair to emphasize the person involved in the activity.
- **Urban Sustainable Infrastructure guidelines.** Comprehensive guidance from the City of Chicago that should be referred to.
- **Multi-functional role of streets.** Streets are not just for travel, they play a multi-dimensional role and could include more ecosystem services.

## 6.0 Other Business.

None.

## 7.0 Public Comment

Jim Anderson made a number of comments:

- Transportation section is good
- Environment chapter is falling short on a number of ideas that were first generated at the ON TO 2050 Open House kick off.

- Prioritizing natural resources protection is crucial and need to prevent the major impacts of regionally significant transportation projects. RSPs should add ecosystem services.
- Redevelopment strategy should emphasize the benefits of the urban tree canopy, air quality, stormwater, etc.
- If goal is to limit expansion of development on open space, state that more explicitly.
- Supports agricultural focus in the chapter and it should emphasize upgrading the quality of the production. The industrialization of our food system is not benefiting the region – the problems in the Chain o’ Lakes are largely due to agricultural practices. We need to figure out how to improve the practices and include more local food production.
- Against the emphasis on “high priority” natural lands; we need to retain everything and recommends we keep the phrase natural areas and include ecosystem services.
- Recognize the innovative watershed planning practices going on in Salt Creek, Des Plaines, Fox River.
- Emphasis on reducing transportation delays is misplaced, we need to encourage patience.
- Corridors along transportation routes are greenways, they are not habitat corridors.

Garland Armstrong made a comment that the operational response of transit agencies to road flooding needs to be improved so that bus riders can adapt to the information and/or be otherwise accommodated. This is particularly true for people in wheelchairs who are more vulnerable to these disruptions.

## 8.0 Next Meeting

The next ENR Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 3, 2018.

## 9.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Nora Beck (ENR Committee Liaison)  
 April 5, 2018